



AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Damon Covington
Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Contract with Priority Dispatch

DATE: February 20, 2023

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Mar 14, 2024 12:29 PDT)

Date: Mar 14, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends City Council Adopt A Resolution: (1) Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Inter A Five (5) Year Contract With Priority Dispatch To Continue To Use Its Medical Priority Dispatch Systems (MPDS) Software Licenses Triage Cards / Tablets And External Auditing Of 911 Cards/Tablets, And External Auditing Of The City Of Oakland's 911 Medical Dispatch Services In An Amount Not To Exceed One Hundred Forty-Five Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$145,800) For The Period July 1, 2023 Through June 30, 2028, With Four One-Year Options To Extend In An Amount Not To Exceed Twenty Nine Thousand One Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$29,160) Per Year, And Without Returning To Council, For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed Two Hundred Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Forty Dollars (\$262,440); And (2) Waiving The Competitive Multi-Step Solicitation Process For The Acquisition Of Information Technology Systems And Waiving the Local And Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of this resolution will authorize the Fire Department Dispatch Center (FDC) to continue providing medical triage for 911 emergency calls. The MPDS program has been in place since 1995 and is required to maintain the Department's status of an Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE). Maintaining an ACE accreditation in Medical Dispatch demands adherence to software updates, as well as updates in medical triage cards as protocols change. It also requires an aggressive and continuous cycle of performance audits, individualized feedback, and focused training and monitoring, which is provided by Priority Dispatch.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The City of Oakland has provided medical triaging for 911 calls with the MPDS program since 1995. This triaging allows the Fire Department to send the appropriate resources to the caller based on the severity of the situation, which has become more important since the Fire Department began its paramedic program in 2000. This process allows dispatchers to rapidly dispatch the appropriate paramedic care to those in need of assistance.

Public Safety Committee
March 26, 2024

The Emergency Medical Services Retention Act (Measure M) was passed by the voters in 1997 (Ordinance No. 12335 C.M.S.) as an assessment to fund emergency services in the City of Oakland. Measure M provides funding through a parcel tax to directly support the Paramedic Program. Funding of the MPDS program is an allowable use of Measure M funds.

In 2015, [the City Council passed Resolution number 85636 C.M.S.](#), which authorized the City to award the current contract to Priority Dispatch in an amount not to exceed one hundred fifty-seven thousand nine hundred ninety seven dollars and eighty cents (\$157,997.80) for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018 with two one-year options to extend in an amount not to exceed fifty two thousand six hundred sixty-six dollars (\$52,666) each year, for a total contract amount including the extensions, not to exceed two hundred sixty three thousand three hundred twenty nine dollars (\$263,329), and waived of the City's RFP/Q process for the agreement.

In June 2020, [with the passage of Resolution number 88196 C.M.S.](#), the City Council approved a new one-year contract with the option for the City and vendor to extend the agreement for an additional through 2023. Adoption of this resolution and subsequent authorization of a new contract agreement with Priority Dispatch will ensure there is no interruption of critical emergency dispatch services.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The Oakland Fire Department Dispatch Center (FDC) staff of dispatchers provided emergency medical dispatch to approximately 65,000 emergency calls for service in 2023. The Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) used by the FDC is the internationally recognized standard for providing medical instructions and dispatching services to 911 callers. The MPDS evaluates calls and allows for the rapid dispatch of appropriate first responders and County Transport Ambulances based on its internationally recognized standards of service to the public.

Adoption of the resolution aligns with the citywide priorities of **holistic community safety** and **responsive transparent government**, as dispatching for emergency incidents is a key component of the city's overall safety efforts, and a high-level city service that residents and businesses deserve.

Oakland is the only city in Alameda County with a tiered response system that evaluates calls and allows for the rapid dispatch of appropriate first responders and County Transport Ambulances based on its internationally recognized standards of service to the public. Of the 63,081 medical calls (911) triaged with MPDS in 2022, the FDC was able to determine 14,314 (27%) were of a low acuity that did not require a Fire Department response or a lights and siren response from the County Transport Ambulance. This kept Fire Department resources available for high acuity emergencies - both medical and suppression related.

Medical calls (911) require the highest level of oversight and continuous audit and review. This contract will assist in meeting the requirements to maintain the Dispatch Center's ACE accreditation as well as providing an unbiased, external, and consistent audit process for this

critical community service.

Recommendation to Waive the Competitive Process for the Acquisition of Computerized and Information Technology Systems and Local Business Enterprise/Small Local Business Enterprise Requirements

Priority Dispatch is the proprietary vendor of the MPDS triaging system, which has been used by the Oakland Fire Department Dispatch Center since 1995. All existing computer software contained within the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system is an MPDS product. Changing to any other method of triaging medical 911 calls would require extensive modifications to the CAD system. Additionally, costs would include retraining all fire dispatch personnel on the new programs. Most importantly, the Alameda County EMS Agency requires any communications center that provides triage of medical 911 calls to use the MPDS system.

Using existing staff (a Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement Officer and addition of Communications Supervisor) to perform in house Quality Assurance training (QA) would require at a minimum, approximately 108 hours of supervisor overtime with QA Officer oversight each month to maintain the Center's ACE accreditation, resulting in an approximate annual cost of at least \$74,243 and a minimum cost of \$222,729 over a three-year period. The QA review portion of the proposed contract with Priority Dispatch is \$38,400 annually. This represents an annual savings of approximately \$35,843 and \$108,729 in savings over the three-year contract period, when compared to having existing staff perform the required QA reviews.

Oakland Municipal Code (OMC) Section 2.04.042.A requires that the City Administrator conduct a competitive multiple-step solicitation process for the acquisition of any computerized or information technology systems. OMC Section 2.04.042.D provides that the City Council may waive the competitive process upon a recommendation of the City Administrator and finding and determination by the City Council that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the solicitation processes. Staff recommends that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the competitive multiple-step solicitation process for the acquisition of any the proposed computerized or information technology systems based on the following considerations: (1) Priority Dispatch is the proprietary vendor of the MPDS triaging system, which has been used by the Oakland Fire Department Dispatch Center since 1995; (2) using a different system will require extensive modifications to the CAD system and additional costs (include retraining all fire dispatch personnel); and (3) most importantly, the Alameda County EMS Agency requires any communications center that provides triage of medical 911 calls to use the MPDS system

Regarding the Local Business Enterprise/Small Local Business Enterprise ("LBE/SLBE") Program requirements, Ordinance No. 13647 C.M.S. requires a minimum 50-percent (50%) and participation for all professional service contracts valued at or over fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) when there are at least three certified businesses listed in the industry, trade, or profession that constitutes a major category of work; and if at least three L/SLBEs are not certified, then the requirement is either waived, or the 50% requirement may be set at a percentage from 50 % to 0%, but not less than 20% if at least one LBE/SLBE is certified and available. The Council may waive the City's LBE/SLBE program requirements if it is in the best interests of the City to do so. City staff recommends that City Council waive the LBE/SLBE due to the fact that Priority

Dispatch is located in Utah and for the same considerations for which waiver of the competitive process for the acquisition of computerized and IT systems is recommended.

COORDINATION

Staff coordinated with the Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau in preparing this agenda report.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total potential cost of the proposed contract will not exceed \$262,440 which includes the original five-year contract in an amount not to exceed \$145,800 plus four-one year contract extensions in an amount not to exceed \$29,160 per year.

Funds shall be drawn from the Measure M (Fund 2412), Communication Emergency Dispatch Organization (20251), Contract Account (54919), and Dispatch Communication Program (PS20). Funding for the future years of the contract is contingent upon funding availability in future budget cycles. There is no impact to the General-Purpose Fund.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Voter approved funds will be used for this contract, therefore no expense to the City's general fund will be incurred.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities related to this position.

Social Equity: This contract for services will assist with improving the quality of services provided on medical dispatch calls, thereby benefitting Oakland residents who receive Oakland Fire Department medical services.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends City Council Adopt A Resolution: (1) Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Inter A Five (5) Year Contract With Priority Dispatch To Continue To Use Its Medical Priority Dispatch Systems (MPDS) Software Licenses Triage Cards / Tablets And External Auditing Of 911 Cards/Tablets, And External Auditing Of The City Of Oakland's 911 Medical Dispatch Services In An Amount Not To Exceed One Hundred Forty-Five Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$145,800) For The Period July 1, 2023 Through June 30, 2028, With Four One-Year Options To Extend In An Amount Not To Exceed Twenty Nine Thousand One Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$29,160) Per Year, And Without Returning To Council, For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed Two Hundred Sixty Two Thousand Dollars Four Hundred Forty

Dollars (\$262,440); And Waiving The Competitive Multi-Step Solicitation Process For Local And Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements

For questions regarding this report, please contact Deputy Chief Demond Simmons at 510-238-4054.

Respectfully submitted,



Damon Covington, Fire Chief

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and David Eberle, Fire Communications
Manager